

Congressman Paul Honored for Defending Civil Liberties

Washington, DC: Congressman Ron Paul, known in Washington for his unyielding opposition to big government, was honored yesterday for his defense of civil liberties during the 107th Congress. Paul won the prestigious Thomas S. Szasz Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Cause of Civil Liberties, which is presented annually to individuals who champion the cause of the individual against the growing abusive power of the state. Paul was chosen in particular for his outspoken resistance to the Patriot Act, which grants the federal government unprecedented surveillance powers over American citizens.

An award reception was held at the Cato Foundation, where Paul spoke before an audience of libertarian and conservative activists. Paul described the careless passage of the Patriot Act, the lengthy text of which was never read by the vast majority of Congress. Paul stressed that the unconstitutional police powers granted by the Act had been sought by law enforcement long before the events of September 11th, and that Congress had surrendered far too much authority to the executive branch.

Thomas Szasz is the preeminent defender of individual rights in the fields of psychiatry and psychology. Throughout his lengthy career he has remained a steadfast champion of the classical liberal values of voluntary interaction, the rule of law, and an open society. His struggle on behalf of civil liberties has been sustained over a lifetime of brilliant intellectual accomplishment.

"Congressman Paul has been a tireless defender of individual freedom in all spheres during his tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives," stated a spokesman for Szasz's Center for Independent Thought. "While his emphasis has been on economic freedom, such as cutting taxes and promoting a market-based monetary system, he also has battled on behalf of personal privacy and civil liberties. Paul deserves praise for insisting that the prevention of terrorism must not be turned into an excuse for limiting liberty."